

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Expenditure on advertisement and publicity for road related works

*125. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision in principle to increase advertisements to highlight plan proposals, laying of foundation stones and emphasize publicity for all road related works;

(b) the expenditure being incurred by Government and NHAI on the advertisement being issued to inform public of foundation stone laying activities;

(c) whether this is purely a non-productive expenditure;

(d) if so, whether Government would reduce such advertisements to save public fund; and

(e) the steps proposed to stop such wasteful expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The Government/National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) are incurring only need based expenditure on advertisements to inform and educate the people about the Government's policies and programmes with a view to motivate them to participate in development activities. The expenditure incurred by the Government and NHAI on advertisements on foundation stone laying activities is as under:

(Rs. in crore)	
Year	Expenditure (Provisional)
2004-05	0.66
2005-06	1.08
2006-07 (upto October, 2006)	0.45

(c) to (e) The advertisements for foundation stone laying activities help in dissemination of information about the projects to the stakeholders. It sensitizes the local population for resettlement and

rehabilitation, makes the State Government authorities aware about the projects which helps in acquisition of land, shifting of utilities and getting mandatory clearances. It also helps stakeholders to plan their activities as per the proposed road development.

Appeals pending before CIC

***128. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a huge backlog of appeals pending before Central Information Commission;

(b) if so, the details since when these appeals are pending;

(c) whether it is also a fact that CIC is disposing off appeals without giving due opportunity to the person of being heard;

(d) if so, the number of appeals disposed off in such a manner; and

(e) whether there is any scarcity of members or staff in the Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI SURESH PACHOURI):

(a) and (b) The Commission received a total of 4110 complaints/appeals upto 22/11/2006 of which 2455 have been disposed off. Out of 1655 pending complaints/appeals, 68 are pending for more than 200 days.

(c) The Commission generally gives an opportunity of hearing before deciding the appeals. However, where there is no merit in the appeal or dispute about the facts, the cases are decided on the basis of available records.

(d) The Commission does not maintain records in this regard.

(e) Sufficient number of Information Commissioners have been appointed and posts of staff sanctioned for the Commission.